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Military Veterans From Area Receive Scholarships

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Three people from the area have received a Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans College Scholarship. The recipients are Robert Wilke of Jacksonville, LaToya Allen of Havelock and Charles Willis of New Bern.

The program is designed exclusively for those who have served honorably in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. The Horatio Alger Military Veterans Scholarship Program currently supports 2,114 returning veterans, giving them a chance to obtain a higher education and consequently broader life opportunities. This year, 233 military veterans will receive college scholarships.

"We are proud to have more than 2,000 veterans as part of the Horatio Alger Association. These young men and women have fought to protect our country and should be given the benefits of an education upon returning home," said Horatio Alger Association Executive Director Terrence J. Giroux.

The scholarship fund, totaling more than \$15 million, is sponsored by Horatio Alger Member, Chairman Emeritus and Treasurer, Ambassador George L. Argyros and his wife Julia of Costa Mesa, CA. The pair was inspired to create the program in 2005 as a means to demonstrate appreciation and offer educational opportunities that may result in an easier transition to civilian life.

Scholarship recipients will each be awarded \$5,000 to support their undergraduate education. Eligible applicants to the Horatio Alger Military Veterans Scholarship must demonstrate the following: Service under the United States Military in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan or Operation Iraqi Freedom beginning Sept. 11, 2001, or later; Honorable service record under the United States Military; Critical financial need; Intention to pursue a bachelor's degree (BA or BS) at an accredited college or university in the United States (awardees may begin their studies at a two-year institution and then transfer to a four-year institution); No more than 60 cumulative semester/credit hours by the end of the 2008 spring term; Minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0; Integrity and perseverance in overcoming adversity; U.S. citizenship.

To date, the Horatio Alger Association has awarded 2,114 Military Veterans Scholarships in each branch of the military: Air Force: 107, Army: 928, Marine Corps: 662, National Guard: 271, Navy: 146.

For more information about the scholarships, please visit www.horatioalger.org.